

III. REMARKS

Claims 1 and 3-33 are pending in this application. By this Supplemental Amendment, claim 1, 3 and 32 have been amended and claim 2 has been cancelled. Reconsideration in view of the following remarks is respectfully requested.

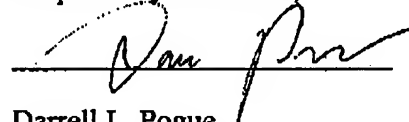
This application claims priority to International Appln. Serial No. PCT/US2003/05314, hereinafter "'05314." Accordingly, Applicants respectfully direct the Office's attention to the International Preliminary Examination Report, submitted herewith for reference, for '05314. In the examination report, the examining office has indicated a favorable determination with respect to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability. Examination report, p. 4. As a result, Applicants have amended the claims in the present application to duplicate the claims as examined in the examination report. Applicants submit that claims 1 and 3-31 are allowable and respectfully request that the Office defer to the determination reached in the examination report.

Furthermore, Applicants respectfully request that the Office's previous restriction requirement and species requirement be withdrawn in light of the search performed in connection with '05314. See MPEP §803, in which it is stated that "[i]f the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the Examiner must examine it on the merits, even though it includes claims to independent or distinct inventions" (emphasis added). Applicants respectfully submit that there can be no serious burden on the Office because the search has already been completed. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of both the Restriction and Species Election Requirements.

IV. CONCLUSION

In light of the above, Applicants respectfully submit that all claims are in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner require anything further to place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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